

## VEHICLE BURGLARY PREVENTION

- NEVER leave the keys in your vehicle.
- Always lock the doors, even when you are away from the vehicle for a short time. NEVER leave your vehicle running unattended.
- Always roll up your windows when you leave your vehicle, even when it's parked in the driveway or garage.
- Place items out of sight before you reach your destination. If you can't take personal property with you, lock items in the trunk. Do not place them under the seat. This includes your purse or wallet, CDs, books, cash, keys, cell phone, laptop, garage door opener, gym bag, briefcase, jewelry, tools, packages, etc. If a thief breaks into your vehicle and steals your garage door opener and keys, they have access to your home.
- Do not leave ANY mail in your vehicle. These have your name, address and possibly contain personal financial information.
- Remove "pull out" style stereos and/or removable face plates of stereos.
- Park in well-lighted areas. At home, park your vehicle near porch lights if you don't have a garage. Install motion detectors.
- At night park in well-lighted areas with pedestrian traffic.
- Avoid alleys.
- Set any alarm or anti-theft device.
- NEVER leave any documents, credit cards or checkbook in your vehicle. Remove the vehicle registration from your vehicle and keep it with you.
- NEVER place hidden keys in the car.

## IF YOUR CAR IS STOLEN

Promptly report it to law enforcement and your insurance company. Have this information ready:

YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

COLOR \_\_\_\_\_

MAKE \_\_\_\_\_

MODEL \_\_\_\_\_

LICENSE PLATE \_\_\_\_\_

VIN \_\_\_\_\_

INSURANCE CO. \_\_\_\_\_

POLICY # \_\_\_\_\_

INSURANCE AGENT \_\_\_\_\_

INS. AGENT PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_

MESA POLICE NON-EMERGENCY:  
**(480) 644-2211**

(Keep this information in your purse or wallet)

# Vehicle Security

Tips to help reduce the chance of your vehicle being stolen or burglarized.



Mesa Police Department  
Crime Prevention  
[www.mesaaz.gov/police](http://www.mesaaz.gov/police)

## YOU CAN HELP PREVENT CAR THEFT

Though professional car thieves have entered the field in increasing numbers, most cars are still taken by amateurs who can be stopped fairly easily. You can greatly increase your protection against this type of crime by taking the following sensible precautions.

### LOCK UP...

- An unlocked car is an open invitation to a car thief. *Lock up whenever you leave your car, and take the keys with you.*
- Lock the trunk and/or tailgate.
- Close all windows -- professional thieves have tools that help unlock cars through a minimum of open space.

### USE "ANTI-THEFT" DEVICES...

- When buying a car, check the manufacturer's list of anti-theft options, such as interior hood and trunk releases, locking steering columns and others.
- Consider the purchase and installation of security devices, such as:
  - ✓ Electric windows/doors.
  - ✓ Electronic key.
  - ✓ Keypad access.
  - ✓ Steering wheel lock.
  - ✓ Interior hood lock and release.
  - ✓ A starter interrupt switch ("kill switch") which prevents electrical current from reaching the coil distributor, or a fuel switch which prevents fuel from reaching the carburetor.

- ✓ A locking gas cap.
- ✓ An alarm device which will activate a siren, horn or lights — or all three — to frighten the thief away before he is able to steal your car. *Avoid a security system with an override feature.*

### VIN ETCHING...

This is chemically etching the vehicle identification number on the windows of your vehicle which effectively discourages thieves from taking your vehicle. Chop shops thrive on vehicles that have easily removable VINs or no etching at all.

The Mesa Police Department, as well as many other Valley agencies, offer VIN etching for free. Check the Mesa Police Web site for upcoming Mesa events — [www.mesaaz.gov/police](http://www.mesaaz.gov/police).

### IF YOU ARE LEAVING YOUR VEHICLE BEHIND WHILE ON VACATION OR GONE FOR THE SUMMER...

- Take ALL Valuables out of the vehicle.
- Lock the tailgate
- Disable the vehicle using a starter interrupt switch ("kill switch").
- Remove the distributor cap.
- Remove the garage door remote opener.
- Manually lock your garage.
- Take the keys with you.

## WATCH YOUR CAR

The **Watch Your Car** program requires participants to register their vehicles with a law enforcement official, which will enter it into a special database developed by the Arizona Automobile Theft Authority (AATA) and maintained by the Arizona Department of Public Safety.

Registered participants will then display the "Watch Your Car" decal in the window of their vehicle. By displaying the decal, vehicle owners convey to law enforcement officials that their vehicle is not usually in use between the hours of 1 am and 5 am, when the majority of auto thefts occur.

If a police officer sees the vehicle in operation between these hours, they have the right to pull it over and question the operator. With access to the AATA database, the officer will be able to determine if the vehicle has been stolen or not. This also allows law enforcement officials to notify the vehicle's owner immediately upon determination that it is being illegally operated.

To register a vehicle with the Watch Your Car program, the owner must present a valid driver's license, vehicle registration, proof of ownership, and proof of vehicle insurance. For registration

